

Gronert, Theodore G. *Sugar Creek Saga: A History and Development of Montgomery County*. Crawfordsville, Ind.: Wabash College, 1958. (Excerpts pertaining to Gen. Mahlon D. Manson)

Transcribed by Owen M. Bennett, Assistant Director of the Montgomery County Historical Society.

Page 73:

“Another citizen who gained place and power was Mahlon D. Manson. Like Lew Wallace he was an officer in the Mexican and Civil Wars and won high place as a War Democrat. The most important developments of his career, from a local standpoint, came in the post-war period.”

Page 160:

“Lew Wallace and Mahlon D. Manson both raised companies and, in recognition of their recruiting services and previous military experience, were given regimental commands. Wallace was made colonel in the 11th Regiment and Manson in the 10th Regiment. Both units were made up of 90-day volunteers. The state and national authorities were generally confident that the war would be over in three months.”

Page 169:

“In the battle of Resaca on May 14, 1864, General Manson’s Brigade bore the brunt of a rebel charge, and the general was severely wounded while directing the defense. The Union lines held and Sherman was able to use the brigade as a pivot and flank the Confederate forces. The Western boys wrote home praising ‘Uncle Billy’s’ tactics and declared Sherman was the best commander the army ever had because ‘he takes care of us.’”

Page 176:

“Lew Wallace and Mahlon D. Manson remained active on the home front and will appear again as local leaders of rival parties. They were influential in veteran politics and, in the words of a *Journal* editor, ‘served their country in peace as well as war.’”

Page 192:

“Mahlon D. Manson also took part in the Mexican War as captain of Company I, 5th Regiment, Indiana Volunteers. After his return to Crawfordsville he resumed his business as druggist also took an active part in the activities of the Democratic party. He was elected to a term in the Indiana Assembly, 1851-53, and in 1856 was a delegate to the National Democratic Convention. He was ardent supporter of Stephen A. Douglas, believing that this statesman’s plans for compromise offered the only hope of averting war. However, when Lincoln was elected and war came, Manson raised company and was elected captain. He became one of the leading War Democrats of the Hoosier state. Thus like the great majority of his party in the North, Manson gave his wholehearted support to the war effort.”

Page 198-199:

“General Mahlon D. Manson was in active service three years, when he was seriously wounded at the battle of Resaca and was unable to return to active duty for the remainder of war. In 1864 the Democrats presented Manson as their candidate for lieutenant governor, and the General ran ahead of his ticket but was defeated. In 1866 he was unsuccessful candidate for secretary of state and was defeated for Congress in the Grand landslide of 1868. In 1870, however, the Democratic party had regained much of its prewar strength, and Manson defeated his fellow townsman, Lew Wallace, in the race for congressman of the Ninth District.”

“He was defeated in 1872 when he ran against Judge Carson but lost by only 197 votes in an election where the Republicans carried the other offices by 2,000 votes. Manson was chairman of the State Central Committee at the time of the Hayes-Tilden controversy and was one of the leaders who counseled moderation when the hotheads of both parties were threatening to meet any decision unfavorable to their group with violence. In 1876 he was elected auditor of state and in 1884 was chosen lieutenant governor but declined the latter position when he was appointed Director of Internal Revenue for the Lafayette District.”

“This was his last important public office, but up to the time of his death General Manson remained active in the G.A.R., the Mansons and the Methodist Church. As the most prominent local Democrat of his time he won the respect of his political rivals and was given an important post when any local patriotic program was presented. In the political arena of the period 1854-1884 he ranks next to Henry S. Lane in importance. James Wilson did not survive long enough to challenge Manson’s position, and Lew Wallace was not a successful vote getter.”